

ARTICLE APPEARED
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14 October 1985**PETER B. GEMMA JR.****An opposing view**

Law won't win war; let's send hit squads

FALLS CHURCH, Va. — The international terrorist war against the USA is a new battle requiring innovative military strategies and the use of previously unthinkable tactics.

Indiscriminate attacks upon our defenseless citizens — and citizens of other civilized nations — have apparently left the free world powerless to respond.

The only exception seems to be Israel. It has, through word and deed, made it known that those who live by the sword will die by the sword.

The Israeli example is one we should follow. When confronting zealots-turned-gangsters, our response must be in language and action they understand: surgically precise strikes against terrorists and their havens.

If our intelligence operations can identify those responsible for abominable terrorist acts, then secretly and without fanfare our forces should "take out" the perpetrators.

This isn't a call for revenge or reckless retribution, only a suggestion for simple justice.

Let's face it: It is wishful thinking to believe additional legal channels and diplomatic maneuvers will bring these thugs to trial.

It's just not practical, for instance, to deal with the nation of Lebanon when that historic country has ceased to exist as a member of the civilized world.

Beirut is simply a no man's land of tribal warfare. And

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somewhere in that area somebody is holding innocent U.S. hostages. Why not turn the CIA loose, identify the captors, and up the ante for their actions: Free our people or die.

We should have sent an anti-terrorist strike force into Cairo and apprehended or assassinated the four terrorists and their two bosses who commandeered that Italian cruise ship. In one blow, we could have cut off the head of the snake — by nabbing Mohammed Abbas, leader of the fanatic Palestine Liberation Front.

And that "leader" of Egypt, Hosni Mubarak, wouldn't deserve the courtesy of a warning of such action. In the battle against barbarism, there can be no fence-sitters.

Do I suggest abandoning all legal precedents and moral guidelines in combating the worldwide terrorist conspiracy? Of course not. However, how do we deal with the special circumstances of madmen who mercilessly murder elderly, handicapped innocents?

We must instill fear in the hearts of those who wish to humiliate and harm the USA. The new world war of terrorism demands a deterrent of courageous offensive action. Defensive responses alone — mere rhetoric, excruciating and ineffective diplomatic posturing — have proved too costly.